



# EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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CONTENTS	PAGE
■ Episcopal church workers in El Salvador released after international campaign (90001)	2
■ Against the tide, religious leaders in Panama and U.S. decry Panamanian invasion, express concern for the future (90002)	5
■ Bishop White joins delegation with Lutheran bishop to El Salvador (90003)	9
■ Ordination of gay priest stirring nation-wide reaction (90004)	11
■ Tutu's controversial remarks in Israel touch off fierce protest (90005)	16
■ Reaction to New Zealand election mostly favorable (90006)	19
■ Honduran evangelism conference predicts growth for the 90s (90007)	22
■ NEWSFEATURES	
■ Newsmaker interview -- Jerry Hames (90008)	25
■ Presiding Bishop's letter to the bishops of the Episcopal Church on the ordination of a gay priest in Diocese of Newark (90009)	28
■ Presiding Bishop's letter to the bishops of the Episcopal Church on the release of the church workers in El Salvador (90010)	31
■ NEWSBRIEFS (90011)	33





Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

Episcopal church workers in El Salvador released after international campaign

ENS 90001

Seven Episcopal church workers, seized in a predawn raid on November 20 at the Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist in central San Salvador, were released on January 5 by order of a judge. Julio Castro Ramirez, whose brother is a prominent leader of the antigovernment guerrilla forces, is still being detained.

The murder of six Jesuit priests and raids on a number of church facilities set off a firestorm of protest by international church leaders who see the actions as part of a deliberate campaign of terror against churches as they try to help Salvadorans caught in the crossfire of a decade of civil war. In a November 29 statement the leaders of a dozen U.S. churches expressed "outrage over the deliberate and calculated campaign by government forces in El Salvador to intimidate and harass the churches." The church leaders began a campaign of their own--to press U.S. and Salvadoran government officials for an end to the harassment.

On December 5, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning of the Episcopal Church sent four of his bishops to meet with the U.S. ambassador and Salvadoran government leaders, including President Alfredo Cristiani, seeking the release of all church workers. A few weeks later a delegation from the National Council of Churches also met with government leaders to underscore international concerns for the safety of the church workers. Both delegations expressed special concern for the Rev. Luis Serrano, rector of St. John Church and head of CREDHO, the social service agency of the Diocese of El Salvador, which is part of the Episcopal Church in the USA. Serrano had been officially charged with covering up guerrilla activity on the grounds of the church.

In a statement following the release of the church workers, Browning said, "The agonizing period of waiting is finally ending."

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ENS 90001/2

He praised all those who had worked for the release and said the diocesan lawyer would continue efforts for release of Castro.

Browning added that the crisis in Central America continues, and he repeated his call for "a complete reassessment of our government's policy in Latin America" and said the church should lift up the "deep moral issues involved" in such a process.

Bishop William Frey of Colorado, one of the four bishops sent by Browning to El Salvador, said he was convinced the trip was helpful in gaining the release of the church workers. He called the release "a great Epiphany present," referring to the Christian celebration of the twelfth day of Christmas when Jesus was revealed as the Christ to the Magi.

The Rev. Ricardo Potter, the Episcopal Church's partnership officer for Latin America, said the seven church workers faced their release "with mixed feelings. They were happy but still frightened about their safety." Potter said no conditions were placed on their release and everyone "seemed to be in good health."

The Spanish ambassador to El Salvador "played a key role in the release, as he did earlier with some Spanish detainees who were working with the Lutheran Church in El Salvador," Potter added. The ambassador accompanied diocesan officials when they went to the prison at Santa Ana, an hour outside of the capital, to present the court order for the release. Potter said Luis Serrano spent the night at the Spanish embassy and left on January 7 on a flight to Spain for a period of rest.

Browning and Potter stressed that the intimidation of the church in El Salvador continues and "we intend to monitor the situation in the future." The church is looking for volunteers to provide pastoral support for the diocese.

In a letter from Spain, Serrano sent a "fraternal hug of welcome and appreciation" to those who had helped with his release. He said the authorities had "not been able to prove any of the things of which we are accused. But what we do confess is that we have served and





ENS 90001/4

will continue to serve the God of our people." Talking about his time in prison, Serrano added, "God has given us the privilege to be a living and painful testimony of solidarity with our brothers and sisters--prisoners, persecuted, marginalized, and repressed." While in prison, he was prohibited from celebrating the Eucharist for the first time in his 36 years as a priest.

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**caption for photo**

(90001) The Rev. Luis Serrano (left) rector of St. John Evangelist Church in San Salvador, was released after six weeks in detention. He is shown in 1987 photo consulting with the Rev. Vittoriano Jimeno, archdeacon of the diocese, who went to the prison when he received the court order for Serrano's release. (Photo by Onell Soto)

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Against the tide, religious leaders in Panama and U.S. decry  
Panamanian invasion, express concern for the future ENS 90002

Against a tide of public opinion supportive of the December 20 U.S. invasion of Panama, religious leaders in the United States and Panama are speaking out against the American military action and expressing grave concern that the invasion will have drastic consequences for Panama's future.

Almost immediately after he learned of the invasion, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning of the Episcopal Church released a statement that raised serious doubts about the U.S. government action. "I am profoundly saddened that the administration has found it necessary to intervene militarily and unilaterally once again in the affairs of a Western Hemisphere nation--even in the face of extreme provocation."

Although Browning admitted "to some mixed feelings" because of an almost universal desire to end the corrupt government of General Manuel Noriega, he was concerned whether "such a violent act will issue in a just solution." Browning added, "I mourn the deaths both of the U.S. soldiers and civilians and of Panamanian citizens."

Browning's December 21 statement insisted that "the Christmas worship of our people must bear eloquent testimony to the only enduring solution to the tragedies of this world: the sacrificial and forbearing love of the Prince of Peace."

James Hamilton, general secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC), sent a letter to President Bush challenging the administration's decision to use military force to achieve foreign policy goals. "The rationale you have offered the nation . . . for having ordered this invasion is insufficient, in our opinion, to justify this act of war against the Republic of Panama."

Hamilton charged that the military action would succeed in isolating the United States from "a world gradually turning its back on the use of military might as a means of settling disputes."





ENS 90002/2

"The National Council of Churches has long defended certain basic norms of international behavior," Hamilton continued. "These include respect for the international rule of law; respect for treaties freely entered into; recourse to appropriate intergovernmental organizations for resolution of international disputes; and the unacceptability of unilateral acts of military force, whether covert or overt, against another party." Hamilton insisted, "The NCC has consistently challenged governments, including our own, when they have violated these fundamental principles."

The Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett, general secretary of the United Methodist Church's national social action agency, the Board of Church and Society, said that "U.S. intervention in Panama cannot be understood as a valid act of a civilized nation." Fassett's December 20 statement charged "Unilateral intervention, no matter its validity, can never be supported."

In Panama, Episcopal Bishop James Ottley released a pastoral letter regretting "that the changes so longed for by our people did not find a response in the negotiations which were carried out previously, and that they had to be accomplished through an armed intervention, which has left suffering and grief in the wake." Ottley also deplored the "indiscriminate looting of commercial establishments" by some Panamanians.

A statement by the Ecumenical Committee, an organization composed of all denominations in Panama, recognized that its long-standing efforts to promote dialogue and to find solutions to the mounting crisis in Panama had failed, but stated, "We believe that the North American intervention was not the most competent way of solving the crisis."

The committee reported a grim picture in Panama resulting from the invasion. "The bombing and fighting between Panamanian troops and other armed groups has caused serious losses materially and above all in human lives to the civilian population in the cities of Panama, Colon, and in the interior of the country. This situation caused





ENS 90002/3

great confusion and general anarchy . . . .All of this has plunged the entire population into a state of terror and tension."

The Council of Latin American Churches strongly condemned the invasion, referring to it as "a new terrorist action." The council's January 1 statement accused the U.S. government of being the "main obstacle for the establishment of peace" in the region.

"How long will the Christian churches in the U.S. continue to tolerate, and in some cases even justify, these actions that not only violate the most basic human rights, but also the right that the weakest or smallest countries have to make their own decisions and to write their own history?" the statement asked.

#### Sober realities

After the fires had burned out and the dust settled, new questions were being raised about Panama's future. John Kater, the education officer for the Episcopal Diocese of Panama, reported that "the Panamanian economy was dealt a terrible blow by U.S. sanctions. And I have heard estimates that the postinvasion looting may have caused over \$2 billion worth of losses."

"There is tremendous euphoria and optimism on the part of Panamanians now--even the national newscasters refer to the Americans as 'liberation forces'--but I worry about what will happen if this enthusiasm gives way to sober realities," Kater said.

The Rev. Ricardo Potter, Episcopal Church partnership officer for Latin America and the Caribbean, said that the invasion will have grave consequences for U.S. foreign policy in the region. "The use of the military has been a complete embarrassment in the rest of Latin America," Potter said.

While Potter agrees that "Noriega should have been out a long time ago," he worries that "many Latin Americans see this as a return to machine gun and [big] stick diplomacy." Potter said the long-term foreign policy goals must "include a policy that could embody the sentiment, the inner life, of a mutual relationship with the Latin American people."





ENS 90002/4

Potter insists that the invasion of Panama proves U.S. policy there has failed over the years and that the policy is controlled "by a military mentality." He suggested that people in the United States should educate themselves about Latin America so that they could help develop a new policy that would promote "other ways we could be influential and inspirational to [our] Latin American neighbors." Potter admitted that such a policy review on the part of U.S. citizens would "be a long process."

Bishop Ottley has begun to direct his attention toward the future. "Now we await the reconstruction of our country, in which the great majority, especially the poor and needy, may be able to enjoy the riches of this country which has been blessed by God."

The Ecumenical Committee has recommended that "the United States accept its responsibility of repaying losses provoked by the invasion, of lives as well as of material goods, with a preferential option toward the poorest."

In New York City, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief announced that it has already "released \$10,000 in emergency grants to Bishop Ottley to be used for food and medicine by refugees and people made homeless by the invasion," according to Bill Caradine of the Presiding Bishop's Fund.

Bishop Furman Stough, senior executive for mission planning and deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund, has journeyed to Panama on behalf of the Presiding Bishop to survey the situation and to assist the diocese in developing a strategy for recovery and rehabilitation. (Editor's note: A report from Bishop Stough will be carried in the next ENS.)

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caption for photo

(90002) Map of Central America.

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Bishop White joins delegation with Lutheran bishop to El Salvador

ENS 90003

Bishop Roger White of Milwaukee joined an ecumenical delegation accompanying Salvadoran Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez back to his cathedral. Gomez was forced to flee the country in late November after he received death threats. He asked the Salvadoran Humanitarian Aid, Research and Education Foundation (SHARE) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to arrange for an escort back into his country.

On January 5, the day before the delegation arrived, the Salvadoran government released seven Episcopal church workers seized in a November 20 raid at St. John the Evangelist Church in central San Salvador, citing lack of evidence. Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani told the delegation, waiting in Guatemala City, that there was no longer any need for their visit. "We really didn't expect to receive visas," Bishop White said in an interview. "But when we arrived at the airport American Ambassador Walker was waiting for us."

"We had a letter from Cristiani, granting us permission to visit the imprisoned rector of St. John's, Luis Serrano. Some of us decided to use the letter to try visit Julio Castro, the Episcopal church worker still being held." At Santa Ana prison, permission was at first denied, but the group persisted and was finally allowed to greet the prisoner through the bars and then spend 10 minutes with him. "He assured us that his faith was strong, despite his loneliness at being left behind," White said. "They don't really have grounds to hold him. Maybe Cristiani is trying to save face, showing he had some cause to arrest the others," White suggested.

Some of those who had been detained were in the congregation at St. John's when Bishop White preached on Epiphany Sunday. "There is still a lot of fear, so only half the congregation was present," White said.



ENS 90003/2

"Although there was great joy that the prisoners had been freed, it was mixed with some sadness that Serrano had to leave so quickly for Spain."

Members of the delegation also joined Gomez at Resurrection Lutheran Church on Sunday. "Gomez received two death threats during the service, and the church was constantly buzzed by military helicopters. It was a very threatening situation," White said.

The group also went to Central American University where the Jesuits were murdered on November 11, touching off what is being called a calculated and systematic campaign of repression against the churches in El Salvador. White said the visit was "devastating," since nothing had been touched; the blood was still spattered on the walls. "It seemed frozen in time," White added. "The amount of ammunition that was used was just unbelievable."

While at the university, members of the delegation participated in an ecumenical memorial service in the chapel where the Jesuits are buried in the wall. Roman Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, and Episcopalians "emerged for the first time, feeling it was safe since there was an international presence," White said. "We heard a whole litany of persecutions in what was obviously an incredibly brave witness. We all left feeling that our presence had helped that happen." White and the others are convinced that the government is determined to "keep international eyes off the situation in El Salvador." They also believe this is an "opportune time" to push for a diplomatic solution, since it is obvious no military solution is possible.

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Ordination of gay priest stirring nation-wide reaction      ENS 90004

by James Solheim

The ordination to the priesthood of an openly gay deacon in the Diocese of Newark is stirring considerable reaction from different quarters of the Episcopal Church--including a threat to seek action against the bishop.

When Bishop John Spong ordained Robert Williams on December 16, he had acknowledged in a letter to the other bishops of the church that the decision would "generate some debate and controversy." Spong told his colleagues in the House of Bishops that he regretted "whatever pain any of you might endure because of this action," but he said the diocese was acting "with integrity and with competence."

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said in a statement released the day before the ordination that he hoped the ordination would "encourage positive debate, rather than polarization." In a subsequent December 21 letter to the bishops of the church, after the reactions had begun, he said, "Many of you have shared with me your pain and anger, and I want to tell you that I am not without those emotions myself." Browning said it was his responsibility to uphold "the authority, mind, and voice of the General Convention" when it said in 1979 that it was "inappropriate" to ordain practicing homosexuals.

Much of the reaction over the Newark ordination seemed to center on the authority of General Convention resolutions. In a December 15 letter to the Episcopal Church, Browning noted that efforts to make a canonical statement on either side of the issue have failed. He contended that "how we behave toward one another in matters of controversy is a mark of who we are in Jesus Christ."

In his letter to the bishops (see Newsfeature section for text), Browning expressed a "special concern about backlash against our Christian sisters and brothers who are gay and lesbian." After consulting his Council of Advice and Bishop Frederick Borsch who





ENS 90004/2

chairs the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops, Browning said "the question before us is how we as a House can best begin to address these issues for our whole Church of boundaries, collegiality, and authority." Among the issues Browning identified were the interrelatedness of bishops and how their actions affect others, but also the "tension between the prophetic role of the bishop and the need to defend the faith and not scandalize the faithful." He invited the bishops to respond to such issues.

Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire announced his intention to join other bishops in seeking to bring charges against Spong "for having violated his ordination vows to uphold the doctrine and discipline of the church." Wantland has publicly debated Spong on issues of sexual morality and said, "There is a clear intent on the part of a large number of bishops to bring this matter to a clear resolution."

Bishop William Folwell of Central Florida said in a pastoral letter that the ordination was "an act of arrogance which seriously challenges the integrity of General Convention" and also "jeopardizes the collegial unity of the House of Bishops, painstakingly maintained as we have dealt with other controversial and divisive issues." Bishop Francis Campbell Gray of Northern Indiana wrote directly to Spong, accusing him of being motivated by "publicity and little else." Folwell said he was angered both by the ordination itself and by the way it was handled, asking why Spong didn't share his decision and rationale with the bishops when they met in Philadelphia last September. Folwell said he believes the 1979 General Convention resolution against ordaining open homosexuals is binding and that he will join other bishops to present charges against Spong.

In a December 21 memo to his clergy in the Diocese of Texas, Bishop Maurice Benitez said the ordination was "an open and deliberate violation of the doctrinal position of the Episcopal Church as set forth by General Convention, as well as a unilateral and blatant disregard of the teaching of the Church Catholic on the subject."

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ENS 90004/3

Benitez said that some bishops are considering presentments against Spong but that he favored a special meeting of the House of Bishops to present "a resolution of censure of the Bishop of Newark and condemnation of his action."

Eight of the 13 bishops at a meeting of Province V in South Bend, Indiana, passed a resolution that said: "At stake in the Newark ordination is not the position of the Episcopal Church concerning appropriate persons for ordination, but the discipline of the Episcopal Church in addressing actions that violate the spirit of our common life. The richness of our tradition in part flows from the freedom of inquiry that it encourages and the diversity that it engenders. When persons move beyond the broad parameters of our common life as expressed through the General Convention resolution of 1979 and the House of Bishops statement in 1977, the seeds of anarchy are sown." The bishops condemned Spong's action as "a clear violation of the stated teaching of the Episcopal Church." Bishop Edward Jones said in an interview, "It was a time of honest sharing and open discussion of authority in the church, all done in a very good spirit."

Fifteen Province VIII bishops meeting at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley tried to separate the issues, reconciling the church's present stand on the ordination of homosexuals and yet trusting the on-going process that continues to study the issue. "Spong himself is also a part of the issue because he has broken with collegiality," said Bishop William Swing of California. "We hope he will make a public apology and be reconciled with his colleagues in the House of Bishops. If that does not happen, then we would ask for censure," Swing said. "At a time when we are moving into a decade of evangelism, why are we making the Bishop of Newark the center of attention? That strikes me as a sad and mischievous turn of events," he added.

The Episcopal Synod of America (ESA), formed last June as a "church within a church" to oppose liberal trends in the denomination, called





ENS 90004/4

on Spong to cancel the ordination and then sent a representative to the ordination to protest that it was "contrary to the beliefs and will of the church." (See ENS 89260.)

Bishop Clarence Pope, president of the ESA, told Religious News Service that "many, many bishops" around the country are considering the possibility of charges against Spong but that it was not yet clear if traditionalist bishops were prepared to announce their support of such action.

The Prayer Book Society's Executive Committee passed an "emergency" resolution on December 20 calling the ordination "another in a lengthy list of conscious and deliberate violations of canon law and doctrinal principles of the church." The society called on the House of Bishops to censure Spong and "suspend his dominion and authority" over the Diocese of Newark, to remove Spong as bishop, and to declare the ordination of Williams invalid. The society has brought charges against Spong on two other occasions, but these were dismissed.

Spong says reaction is 'generally favorable'

Bishop Spong, in an interview after his return from a Province II meeting, said the reaction from his colleagues has been "generally favorable." He said his office has received only one negative letter from within the Diocese of Newark.

Spong said he has received "lots of mail from all over the country" and that it seems to fall into two categories. "The positive mail comes from those whose lives are most directly affected--and it is a deeply personal response." On the other hand, the negative mail comes from those who "are very angry and quote the Bible to me, as though I didn't know what the Bible says," Spong added.

Although some bishops have written critical letters, others have expressed support, "but that does not surprise me," Spong said. He admits that some of the letters have objected to the publicity surrounding the ordination, but Spong argues that the church should





ENS 90004/5

always do its business "openly and honestly." He said Integrity, the national organization for gay and lesbian Episcopalians offered him a list of at least 10 "out-of-the-closet priests, living in committed relationships, who have been ordained with the knowledge and consent of their bishops, and who are willing to go public."

In a January 8 press release, Integrity said Williams's ordination "was only the latest in a long series of ordinations of open, self-affirming, noncelibate lesbians and gays in the Episcopal Church" since the 1977 ordination of Ellen Barrett by the Diocese of New York. According to Integrity, the 1979 resolution against ordaining homosexuals "has been widely ignored."

"Since 1977 on average at least five open, noncelibate lesbians or gays have been ordained every year in dioceses from coast to coast," said Integrity president Kim Byham. "Other ordinations may not have received such widespread press and television coverage, but they nevertheless involved priests who were open about their sexuality with their bishops, standing committees, and commissions on ministry."

"I'm not particularly concerned about the possibility of charges being brought against me," Spong said, "because no canons have been violated. You can't try a bishop for violating a General Convention resolution." Spong said it is also curious that the church would allow some bishops "in conscience to ignore the canon which allows the ordination of women and yet object to including open, responsible homosexuals."

The Diocese of Newark spent four years struggling with the issue and came to a clear, reasoned decision, Spong argued. "Perhaps our experience would be valuable to other dioceses of the church who are trying to reach some decision on this issue," he concluded.

The church's Standing Commission on Human Affairs is conducting the formal dialogue on sexuality, holding open hearings and conversations with persons holding a wide variety of opinions. Bishop George Hunt of Rhode Island, who is chair of the commission, said he hopes the commission will have a report ready for the next General Convention, in Phoenix in 1991.



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Tutu's controversial remarks in Israel touch off fierce protest

ENS 90005

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Primate of Southern Africa, ended a five-day Christmas visit to Jerusalem amid fierce protests when he compared Israel's handling of Palestinians to the treatment of blacks in South Africa. Tutu's comments have ricocheted around the international community to charges that he was insensitive to Jews.

"In the methods of resistance used by Palestinians, and in the ways the Israeli government deal with resistance, we experience an extraordinary sense of being at home," Tutu said. "The land that gave birth to the Prince of Peace is wracked by violence, hatred and hostility."

"We say very firmly that Israel has a right to existence as a sovereign state," Tutu said. "But I pray, too, that Israel hear the cry of the Palestinians, that they, too, are created in the image of God. We support the Jewish people in their right to exist as an independent nation. We pray for the day to come soon when the Palestinian state will exist side by side with the Jewish state and Arab and Jew will hold hands together as those who say 'Shalom' and 'Salaam.'"

Tutu's remarks during a Christmas pilgrimage billed as a pastoral visit drew fire from many political factions in Israel. Some Palestinians were apparently unsatisfied with Tutu's reluctance to express support for the Palestinian Liberation Organization, while many Israelis were angered over the criticism of government efforts to end the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The archbishop said, "We are aware that the Israeli Government is very sensitive over suggestions that it treats Palestinians the way the South African Government has treated black South Africans. But our faith compels us to state what we perceive to be the truth and to speak up for justice everywhere, whether in South Africa, the rest of





ENS 90005/2

Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe or China. Denouncing injustice is for us a religious duty, not a political act."

Although Tutu did not meet with members of the Israeli government nor travel to the refugee camps, he said that the Christmas visit convinced him "that reconciliation in the Middle East is possible." Tutu said he saw evidence that "Arab and Jew, Palestinian and Israeli can work together."

Tutu reported that he had met "many Palestinians who agree with our call that Israel must be assured of its right to exist with territorial integrity as a sovereign state." And, he added, "At Beit Sahour, we were told that many Israelis recognize the right of the Palestinians to self-determination in their own state."

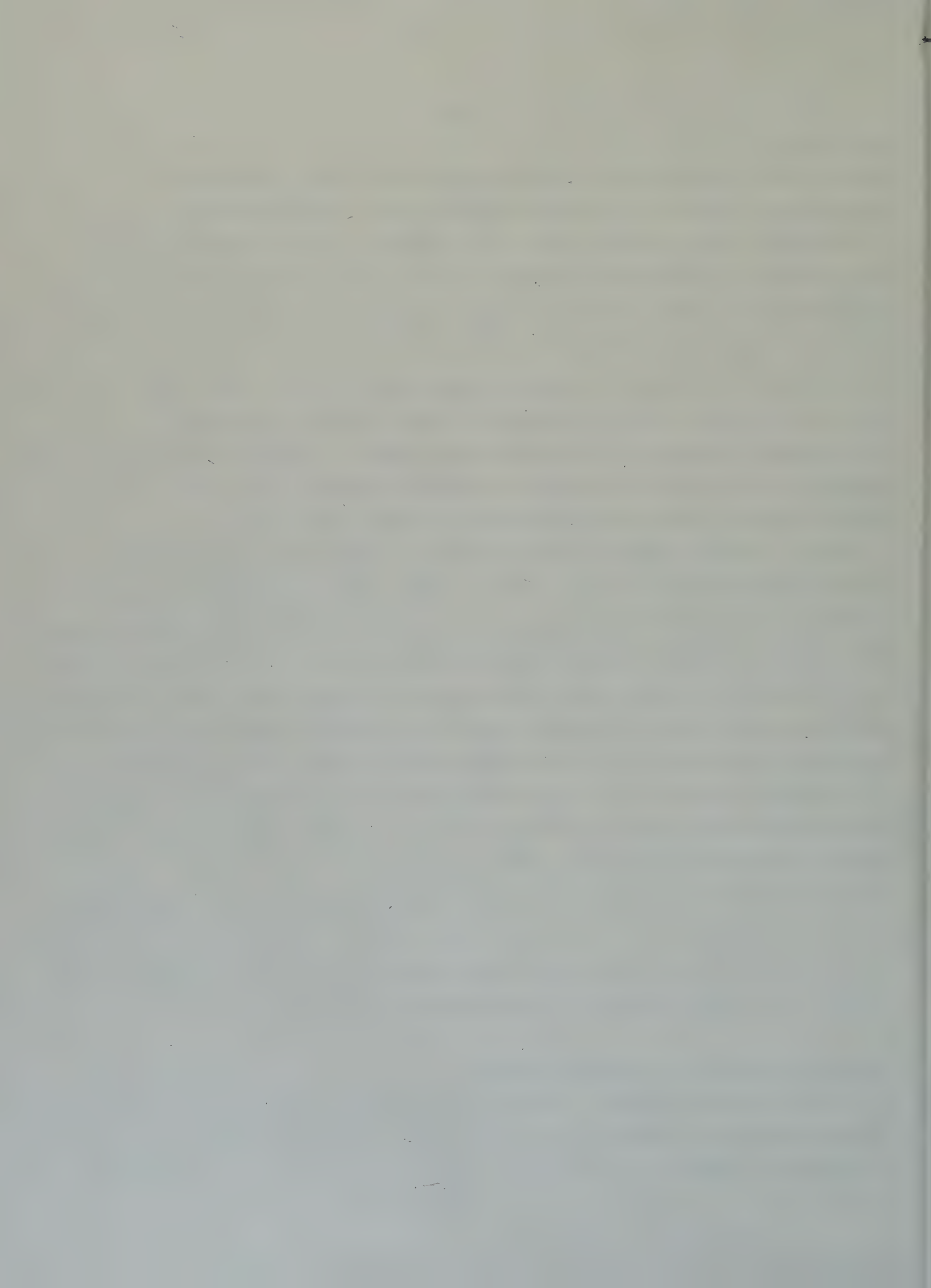
Tutu further angered Israelis when he suggested that Israelis should pray for and forgive those responsible for Nazi genocide. His comments were recorded after a visit to Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial. "Our Lord would say that in the end the positive thing that can come is the spirit of forgiving, not forgetting, but the spirit of saying: God, this happened to us," Tutu said. "We pray for those who made it happen, help us to forgive them and help us so that we in our turn will not make others suffer," he continued.

Although supporters of Tutu have said that the bishop's comments were consistent with Christian doctrine of forgiveness of adversaries, some observers charged the remarks displayed an insensitivity toward Jews on the part of the South African leader.

In an apparent reaction to the archbishop's comments, protesters scrawled "Black Nazi pig" on the walls of St. George's Cathedral in Arab East Jerusalem where the archbishop was a guest of Bishop Samir Kafity, Anglican bishop in Jerusalem and the Middle East.

#### Reaction from U.S. Jewish leaders

In the United States, former mayor of New York City, Ed Koch, lambasted Tutu's remarks in a column in the New York Post as "standard Third World radical, and clearly an act of malice." Koch accused Tutu





ENS 90005/3

of engaging in "pro-Arab politics," charging that Tutu blindly overlooked a litany of Arab atrocities. Tutu has denied such charges, noting that he has condemned injustice across the board and pointing out that he "condemns any Arab countries which may be breaking the oil embargo of South Africa as strongly as he condemns Israel's reported military and nuclear collaboration with South Africa."

Koch further charged that Tutu does not understand the Jewish concept of forgiveness, "that forgiveness can only be offered by the actual victim." Koch said that "Bishop Tutu can 'forgive' the Nazis if he wants," but insisted that only the victims of Nazi atrocity could legitimately forgive the perpetrators.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, charged that "Bishop Tutu showed the arrogance of medieval crusader who came to Yad Vashem with a bag full of his brand of Christian morality. The bishop surely knows where that Christian conscience was when millions of Jews and others suffered at the hands of the Nazis."

Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, echoed Hier's comments, suggesting that if Tutu "could not get himself to say anything about the culpability of a Christian civilization that did so little to help the victims of the Holocaust, he might at least have observed a respectful silence."

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Reaction to New Zealand election mostly favorable      ENS 90006

The Rev. Penelope Jamieson, elected in November the Anglican Communion's first woman diocesan bishop, admitted in an interview with a local newspaper that her election "is going to be painful for a lot of people." Yet, Jamieson insisted that the diocese might grow from the tensions resulting from her election. "The people have clearly said this is what they want, and that they will stand by the obvious differences and difficulties that will arise."

Jamieson recognized that her election as bishop of Dunedin would reverberate throughout the Anglican world, but expressed hope it would not be the cause for strife. "We are a separate province," she said of the Anglican Church in New Zealand. "We are autonomous, and I have confidence that the concept of community within the Anglican Church will be wide enough, deep enough, to allow for the acceptance of a woman diocesan bishop."

Jamieson said that the role of a bishop is to "keep a diocese focused on its task, its mission, on the Gospel, on the Christ whom we serve, and to encourage people to live together with their diversity."

When asked how she would approach people who might leave the church because of her election, Jamieson told the Otago Daily Times (Dunedin): "I have no desire to be a stumbling block to anybody . . . . In my experience people leave the church for a large number of reasons, and sometimes the fact that a woman is in a position they find unacceptable is an excuse rather than the reason. I've usually found there are other reasons as well."

Jamieson expressed her own surprise at the news of her election. "I honestly hadn't anticipated that it would happen so soon or that it would happen to me," she said.

"I think I was elected because the diocese felt there was a need, a general urge, to reinterpret the traditional role of a bishop, and to





ENS 90006/2

explore ways of bringing it in line with contemporary feeling. I've always thought the Gospel was about now," Jamieson said in an interview.

Roman Catholics offer "prayerful good wishes"

Bishop Peter Cullinane, secretary of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference, said, "While ordination to the priesthood, including ordination as bishops, is not open to women in the Catholic tradition, the Catholic Church in New Zealand offers prayerful good wishes to the Rev. Penelope Jamieson."

Cullinane said that the appointment raised again the question about why the Roman Catholics and Orthodox churches do not ordain women. He said that the question of ordination should not be confused with questions of the equal dignity of women and men, nor should it be characterized as a matter of "unjust discrimination."

An editorial in the Otago Daily News recognized that Jamieson's election might result in "widening the division with Rome," but added that "she has made some sensible and forthright comments to place the issue in perspective. Her remarks show that she has her feet very much on the ground and recognizes the difficulties that may arise." The paper also suggested that the choice of Jamieson reflects the conscious need for "strong, committed leadership and perhaps the opportunity for new directions to be taken in this modern world."

A similar editorial in the Southland Times (Invercargill) charged: "Women have been serving the church for hundreds of years, mostly in humble capacities, and the time has long been past when they should have attained its highest offices. Only tradition and ingrained prejudices have kept them out and these attitudes are no longer acceptable."

The Nelson Evening Mail wrote: "An argument that any institution should shun women from its key positions sounds pretty antediluvian as we come to the end of what the United Nations has termed the Decade of Women."





ENS 90006/3

The Very Rev. Michael Hurd, dean of Nelson Cathedral, said he would recognize Jamieson as a bishop and believed that there would be more women elected bishops in the future. "We decided 12 years ago that we would have women as priests. Bishops are decided from priests, so it follows on," he said.

The archdeacon of Southland and vicar of St. John's, the Venerable Ken Light, said the election of Jamieson represented the kind of leadership needed by Anglicans. He said her election could not have occurred without "the support of some pretty solid people of Southland and Otago because the feminist lobby isn't that big in the diocesan synod."

Jamieson has also received well wishes from the bishop she will succeed. "I have always supported a women being ordained," said Bishop Peter Mann. "I am very happy the church has now gone the full way," he said.

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Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

Honduran evangelism conference predicts growth for the 90s

ENS 90007

In a spirit of optimism that their church would grow in the 1990s, over 120 representatives of Episcopal parishes and missions from the Diocese of Honduras gathered on a beachside retreat to launch a decade of evangelism.

"We are going to see a positive change in the Episcopal Church in the 1990s if the conference is any indication," said deacon Oscar Lopez, a member of the committee that planned the late November 1989 conference in Puerto Cortes.

"The Great Event," as the four-day conference was called, offered extensive workshops, lectures, and worship services to help participants reevaluate their faith and ministry--and build a strategy for growth.

"Those who attended the conference are the key to the future of the church in Honduras," said Lopez. He suggested that the conference would bear fruit as participants returned home. "Now the participants can get to work in their own parishes. We are very excited in my church," he said.

Many challenges face the Honduran church--particularly in the rural areas, according to Lopez. Lopez feels that the enthusiasm generated at the conference is genuine and that hurdles like lack of resources or illiteracy can be overcome. "Simple things like paper and pencils are rare commodities in some areas. Many people are illiterate, so that priests have to look for unconventional methods of teaching."

Marcy Walsh, former president of Episcopal Church Women, represented the Executive Council Subcommittee on Evangelism at the conference, leading several workshops on women and evangelism. "I tried to encourage the participants to see themselves as evangelizing persons. Since women are natural storytellers, I suggested that one way to evangelize is to tell stories," she said.





ENS 90007/2

"The women told each other stories of times when they felt a particular awareness of God in their lives, or times when Jesus was a very real source of good news to them," Walsh continued. She reported that the women had covenanted to keep in touch and to pray for one another for six months after the conference. "They also agreed to take their experience of the conference back home by telling stories in their local church and in neighboring parishes."

Walsh hoped her presence at the conference had encouraged a growing participation by women in congregational life. "I think the conference has helped the participants to be more open and has challenged them to start some new programs," she said.

After three days of workshops and lectures by international and ecumenical leaders, the pace of the conference shifted as participants ventured into the town of Puerto Cortes to celebrate the Eucharist at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church. Before the service, participants, guests, parishioners, musicians, and vested clergy paraded through the streets singing and waving church banners and lanterns.

As townspeople enthusiastically joined, the procession got larger, weaving through town and into the church. Lopez suggested that the procession and Eucharist exemplified the message of the conference. "First, we must make a commitment to Christ, then to the church, and finally to the works of God. In Puerto Cortes God has demonstrated his testimony in front of the world," he said.

The beachside location of the conference provided a setting that symbolized the contrasts and challenges in the Honduran church. The calm and exotic beach was interrupted by a tropical rainstorm one afternoon. During the storm, as tornadoes threatened the shore from the horizon, young men frantically swept water from the conference room while other participants continued eating the evening meal despite the turbulence.



ENS 90007/3

As participants climbed onto buses that would take them home, choruses of the weekend's theme song could be heard through the retreat center and into the Honduran countryside:

"I will plant and plant  
And plant in this life  
the seed of love.  
I will sow and sow  
And sow, and find myself  
In the house of God."

--based on reports from Kirsten Axell, Episcopal Diocese of Honduras

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# news features

-25-

Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

## Newsmaker interview--Jerry Hames

ENS 90008

When Jerry Hames reported for work on January 2 as editor of Episcopal Life, he brought with him a wealth of experience in both secular and church journalism--and a determination to make the new newspaper of the Episcopal Church "a national publication worthy of a national church."

"We are going to look at the issues through people," Hames said in an interview. "That's the best way to tell the story." He says the publication begins with a modest staff but that he hopes it will be very visible in the life of the church. "We want to be out in the dioceses and congregations listening to the concerns as we plan our issues," he added. Instead of being the publication of a corporate head office, Episcopal Life "should reflect the fears and joys and concerns of our whole church. That includes knowing where the church's leadership is going and what new initiatives are planned for the future."

A Canadian who was born and grew up in Windsor, Ontario, across the river from Detroit, Hames said he "got hooked on journalism" when he was editor of the newspaper at the then Roman Catholic University of Windsor. While a student at Canterbury College, the first Anglican college affiliated with a Catholic university, he worked part-time at the Windsor Star. He joined the staff after graduation as a general assignment reporter writing on education and religion.

When he moved to the London (Ontario) Free Press a few years later, he established a religion beat. Combining his interest in education

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ENS 90008/2

and religion, he began to cover student involvement in the civil rights movement. He accompanied Anglican and United Church of Canada clergy when they went to Alabama in 1965 to march with Martin Luther King Jr., from Selma to Montgomery.

In 1967 Hames was offered a position as press and information officer for the Anglican Church of Canada and saw it as an opportunity to forge a better relationship between the church and the secular press. "It was a time when the church was moving toward a new understanding of communication," he said. "There was an eagerness to receive more news of what was happening in the church, especially the social commitments and involvement."

Hames said attending the Lambeth Conference in 1968 was an important milestone in his career because it gave him exposure to the Anglican Communion--and its journalists. Although the meeting was "very British and not very exciting," Hames said the press facilities were nonexistent, so journalists from the North American churches filled a vacuum by holding daily press briefings.

By the time he returned to the Lambeth meeting in 1988, "the situation was totally different," with a more open agenda that gave bishops a chance to bring their concerns before the group. "Third World bishops, for example, were able to say that crushing debts, poverty, and the environment deserved just as much attention as the issue of women's ordination," Hames said.

The press presence was much more obvious, due partly to a series of meetings the Anglican communicators had with the Primates before Lambeth. "We were able to convince them that it was important to cooperate with the press at Lambeth," Hames observed. "An international communications team was able to respond to the demands of the press. And for the first time simultaneous translation opened up the participation for those bishops whose first language was not English," he added.

In 1970 Hames joined the staff of the Canadian Churchman, first as news editor, then managing editor, and finally as editor in 1975.





ENS 90008/3

"This was a period of risk taking for the Anglican Church of Canada and for the newspaper," Hames said. "We were able to raise the consciousness of Canadian Anglicans to contemporary issues and help them understand what it meant to be a part of the wider Anglican Communion." That knowledge of the church beyond national boundaries is one of the things that has excited him most in his professional career as a church journalist. "Being able to explore the relationship among those who share a common commitment--I find that personally rewarding," Hames added.

When asked if he considers the fact he is a Canadian a disadvantage, Hames chuckles and suggests that not being a part of the Episcopal Church structure may be a source of some freedom. He also talks about having at least "half a network" since he has been involved with the Episcopal Church and its communicators and has attended several General Conventions over the years. "Of course this initial period of listening will be very important--and I will need the support of an experienced and competent staff," he said.

Among his colleagues in the church press, Jerry Hames has built a reputation for calm, thoughtful, steady professionalism. As Chris Walters-Bugbee, director of communications at Trinity Church in New York and a member of the selection committee, said, "His appointment is the clearest indicator yet of the Presiding Bishop's determination that the Episcopal Church will live up to the highest standards of church publishing. I don't see how the Church could possibly have done better."

**caption for photos**

(90008/1/2) Sonia Francis, executive for communication, introduces Jerry Hames to colleagues in the communication department. Hames (on the right) shakes hands with Frank Tedeschi while John Ratti and Sonia Francis look on. (ENS photos by Jim Solheim)

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Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

Presiding Bishop's letter to the bishops of the Episcopal Church  
on the ordination of a gay priest in Diocese of Newark      ENS 90009

As Presiding Bishop I write to put before you serious questions raised by the actions of the Bishop of Newark with respect to the process leading to ordination.

Over the past few day I have talked to numerous members of the House [of Bishops] representing a broad spectrum of opinion. Many of you have shared with me your pain and anger, and I want to tell you that I am not without those emotions myself. I am exceedingly mindful that the 1979 General Convention resolution on the inappropriateness of the ordination of practicing homosexuals still stands, and of my particular responsibility as Presiding Bishop in upholding the authority, mind, and voice of the General Convention.

In my telephone conversations with many of you, issues of the integrity of the General Convention and the boundaries of individual episcopal authority have been seen as just as central to our life as a Church as the actual appropriateness or inappropriateness of ordaining practicing homosexuals.

By this time you will have seen my initial letter to the Church concerning the Newark ordination. The letter's purpose was to make plain three things, which I will reiterate. First, the General Convention has a "mind" on the question of the ordination of practicing homosexuals as expressed by the 1979 resolution. Second, the discussion on this issue continues and is lodged with the Standing Commission on Human Affairs. Third, how we behave toward one another in matters of controversy is a mark of who we are in Jesus Christ.

I would now add that I, along with others, have special concern about backlash against our Christian sisters and brothers who are gay and lesbian. We also must recognize and respond to the many who are offended by the departure from the General Convention stance, and the unilateral and public manner of so doing.





ENS 90009/2

I have consulted individually and corporately over the last few days with my Council of Advice, and with Bishop Borsch in his role as the chair of the Theology Committee. After much prayer and discussion, we believe the question before us is how we as a House can best begin to address these issues for our whole Church of boundaries, collegiality, and authority. While it must be said that the Bishop of Newark does not speak for the Episcopal Church, we do not believe the mission of our Church or the spiritual well-being of the faithful would be served by turning the public spotlight further on him. Unfortunately, to a large degree, that is out of our control.

The Council of Advice and I see questions raised by this ordination. First, what does it mean to live held within the bonds and indeed boundaries of constituted authority as the expression of this Church's understanding of the universal authority and tradition of the Body of Christ? How can we be even more clear that what one does has an effect on the ministry of all the others?

As Richard Norris put it in his essay on "Episcopacy" in The Study of Anglicanism: "Episcopacy in the Anglican tradition has not infrequently been tainted by prelacy or inordinate individualism, or both; and these defects, it might be argued, stem at least in part from structures and attitudes that isolate bishops from those relations of fellowship and communion whose maintenance is the raison d'être of the episcopal office." Questions for us then are: what are the tolerable boundaries of nonconformity, and what is the responsibility of the college of bishops attending those isolating structures and attitudes?

Next, there is always a tension between the prophetic role of the bishop and the need to defend the faith and not scandalize the faithful. How can we live in that tension and, within the bonds and boundaries of our common episcopal calling, assist one another both in fulfilling the prophetic ministry of bishops and in defending the faith?



ENS 90009/3

Further, are we as bishops clear about the distinction between speaking for the Church and to the Church? Do we understand the difference we each need to preserve between the episcopal office and our individual person?

In January bishops of three provinces will gather. I ask the bishops planning these events to use the gatherings to confront with candor and charity, in the spirit of our Philadelphia discussions, the questions the Council of Advice and I have raised. I will continue to consult with the Council and others of you over the Christmas holidays and in early January about the options with which we are presented. I will thereafter share with you the fruits of those conversations.

I will be back in the office the first week in January and would welcome your communications as we attempt to work through this in a way that will best further the ministry of the Church.

In the meanwhile, I ask your prayers for me, our Church, and our House of Bishops, and I assure you of mine for each and all of you. Please share this letter with clergy and laity as you think would be helpful in your dioceses, and then share with me any statements you may make on the matter. Together we have a responsibility to inform our membership of the General Convention position on ordination, as well as the ongoing study by the Commission on Human Affairs and other Interim Bodies. As we do this, we must also stress the importance of being open to one another and acting in love and charity.

Edmond L. Browning  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
December 21, 1989

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Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

Presiding Bishop's letter to the Bishops of the Episcopal Church  
on the release of church workers in El Salvador ENS 90010

I know you join me in giving thanks to God that seven of our eight Church workers have been released from detention in El Salvador. This past Friday I shared with you that our diocesan office in San Salvador had received word that the release of our people had been ordered.

The actual release came late Friday afternoon. Father Luis Serrano left for Madrid on Sunday for a much needed rest. The others remain in El Salvador. Julio Cesar Castro Ramirez remains in detention. Our lawyers in El Salvador are continuing to work for his release. He is being held because his brother is a member of the FMLN.

Please share this news. The agonizing period of waiting, often with despair, has finally ended for seven of our people. So many people in our Church have worked tirelessly to find a resolution to this vexing crisis. All of us should now take time to praise God and give thanks for the safe return of those who have been released. Continue to pray for their safety as the climate of fear and intimidation continues. And pray also for the release of Julio Cesar Castro Ramirez.

While we rejoice in this encouraging development, dear friends, the crisis in Central America continues. I have stated in these past weeks that I believe that there needs to be a reassessment of our government's policy in Latin America from top to bottom. Certainly the intervention in Panama is a further case in point. There are deep moral issues involved which require that the voice of the Church be lifted up and heard.

General Convention and Executive Council have spoken many times to issues regarding Central America and the struggle for peace in that region. I am convening key members of our Church Center staff today to reflect on how we as a Church might better enable the



ENS 90010/2

implementation of those Church policies affecting Central America. I hope to be able to report on this matter to Executive Council in March.

I hope, in time, that the whole Church will join together on this issue in support of our beleaguered but faithful and courageous sisters and brothers in the Ninth Province.

Faithfully yours,  
Edmond L. Browning  
Presiding Bishop  
January 8, 1990

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## *news briefs*

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-33-

Episcopal News Service/Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

### Anglican priest says Romanian Orthodox clergy should resign

ENS 90011

The Rev. Michael Bourdeaux, an Anglican priest and director of Keston College in England, has demanded that leaders of the Romanian Orthodox Church resign for failing to resist the Ceausescu regime. Bourdeaux said in a Christmas Eve BBC interview that "a voice of prophecy at the right time might have saved bloodshed." According to Bourdeaux, "The leadership of the Romanian Church . . . bears some responsibility for not having spoken out and guided the people and criticized the regime . . . ."

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### Israelis rule against citizenship for Jews who believe in Jesus

Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah are not entitled to automatic citizenship under the Law of Return, according to an Israeli Supreme Court ruling. The ruling, published on December 26, upheld an Orthodox religious interpretation of the law, which forms the basis of Jewish immigration to Israel. The law currently defines a Jew as "a person born of a Jewish mother or who has been converted and is not a member of another religion." The court ruling declared that "those who believe in Jesus are, in fact, Christians." Leaders of the messianic group, Jews for Jesus, have denounced the court ruling.

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### Retired Episcopal bishop joins Anglican Catholic Church

The Rt. Rev. Charles F. Boynton, retired suffragan bishop of New York, has left the Episcopal Church to join the traditionalist

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ENS 90011/2

Anglican Catholic Church. Boynton, 82, said in a prepared statement, "After the House of Bishops meeting this fall in Philadelphia, it is clear that the Episcopal Synod of America interests continue to be under the mandate of General Convention and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, along with its heretical theology, questionable morality, and increasingly secular and liberal approach to just about everything." Bishop Boynton served as bishop of Puerto Rico before becoming suffragan of New York in 1951. He retired in 1969, and in 1978 he formally resigned from the episcopacy of the Episcopal Church.

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#### Vatican warns against using techniques of Eastern religions

A 25-page document issued by the Vatican warns against the Christian use of prayer and meditation techniques borrowed from Eastern religions. The letter said the Eastern meditation techniques including attention to breathing and bodily posture--can help people "come before God with an interior peace, even in the midst of external pressures." However, the letter directed those who seek new methods of meditation to keep in mind that the "essential element of authentic Christian prayer is the meeting of two freedoms, the infinite freedom of God with the finite freedom of man." Some critics have already charged that the letter contains some "superficial understandings" of Eastern religion.

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#### Southern Baptists appoint ordained woman as missionary

The appointment of the Rev. Patricia Lee as a missionary to Japan is not against denominational policy, according to the trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The announcement is the latest in a controversy over the ordination of women that has surfaced in the 14-million-member church. While most Southern Baptist churches oppose the ordination of women, a handful of churches has ordained women, with severe repercussions--most have been expelled

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ENS 90011/3

from local Southern Baptist associations. The appointment of Lee "demonstrates that the trustees honestly practice board policy that ordination neither qualifies nor disqualifies a missionary candidate and that ordination is a local church matter," according to the Rev. Mark Corts, chairman of the board of trustees.

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#### Movement for the Ordination of Women protests in Natal

The Movement for the Ordination of Women in the Anglican Church of the Province of Southern Africa held its first public demonstration last December outside the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity in Pietermaritzburg. The demonstration, described by Bishop Michael Nuttall as "a friendly action," occurred at the annual ordination of priests. Many in the congregation--including some clergy--wore yellow daisies as a mark of solidarity with the call to ordain women to the priesthood. The Province of Southern Africa has been involved in a debate over the ordination of women to the priesthood since 1968.

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#### Church of England bishops considering acceptance of gay priests

An official House of Bishops report that calls for the acceptance of gay priests and church endorsement of stable relationships between persons of the same sex is being considered by bishops of the Church of England. The controversial report, the product of a two-year period of study, has not been released publicly on the request of Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie. Runcie advised against releasing the report until the bishops decide whether they wish to take any official action on it. The decision against releasing the report has angered some church liberals who accuse the bishops of failing to come to grips with the issue of gay priests.

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#### Presbyterians oppose homosexual activity and ordination of gays

Three-quarters of all Presbyterians believe homosexual sex is wrong, according to a survey conducted by the Presbyterian Panel.

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ENS 90011/4

Among the categories of persons interviewed, 74 percent of members and 80 percent of elders said homosexual sex is "always wrong." Attitudes were more tolerant if the relationship is viewed as a "loving, caring one." Three-fourths of members and two-thirds of clergy disapproved of "the ordination to the Christian ministry of a person who engages in homosexual activities." By the same margin, they also opposed extramarital sexual relations, clearly stating that sexual expression is best reserved for marriage. In response to another question, more than 90 percent of the clergy and 80 percent of members said the church should offer ministries to persons with AIDS.

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#### Arizona voters may face another decision on holiday for King

Last September the Arizona legislature replaced a Columbus Day observance with one marking the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Since then about 80,000 Arizonans have signed a petition asking that the holiday be put on hold so that the voters can decide in November whether or not to honor King. Several organizations have canceled plans to hold meetings in the state until the issue is resolved.

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#### Religion writers cite changes in Eastern Europe as top story of 1989

The easing of religious restrictions in Eastern Europe and the sweeping changes in East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia was cited as the top news story of 1989, according to a poll of the Religion Newswriters Association. The other important stories were the murder of the Jesuits in El Salvador, controversy over Salman Rushdie's book Satanic Verses, the consecration of Barbara Harris as a bishop in the Episcopal Church, the warning by Catholic bishops to Catholic politicians on taking a pro-choice stand on abortion, the formation of a black Catholic breakaway congregation by the Rev. George Stallings, Jr., the relocation of a Catholic convent from the Auschwitz death camp in Poland, and the Nobel Peace Prize for the





ENS 90011/5

Dalai Lama. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was the top religion newsmaker, followed by televangelist Jim Bakker, Pope John Paul II, and author Salman Rushdie.

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Italian cardinal's remarks about modern women provokes angry reactions

An Italian cardinal's attempts to stress the example of the Virgin Mary as an antidote to evil, sin, and spiritual pollution became a tirade against modern women as "collaborators of death" descended from Eve rather than Mary. Such women "give in to the fascination of evil, become disobedient and an instigator of disobedience." While Vatican officials argued the homily by Cardinal Giacomo Biffi of Bologna could prompt "reflection on the role of woman in society and in the church," others condemned the comments as a renewal of the church's fight against abortion and general hostility to women. Some observers expressed fears that the church was returning to the time when it attributed the entire weight of original sin to woman, in the person of Eve, "who immediately took her place in our history as the mother of guilt and remorse," in Biffi's own words.

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InterVarsity Christian Fellowship president refutes headlines

Dr. Stephen Hayner, president of the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, has issued a statement refuting headlines reported in Religious News Service (Nov. 17) and the Episcopal News Service (Dec. 8, 1989, #89257), which reported that he believed "God may permit committed gay relationships." Hayner's November 21 statement said, "The biblical view of what a sexual relationship should be is this: one man and one women united in marriage. Anything other than that is a distortion of biblical truth and God's plan." Hayner does, however, stand by his statement that homosexuality is just one of the sins listed in the Bible and should not be singled out as a sin greater than all others.

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ENS 90011/6

Correction: inaccurate elevating and lowering

The Episcopal News Service regrets two errors concerning the Rev. Canon George Brandt in the December 19, 1989, release contained in the story, "Growing ecumenical concern over AIDS produces landmark document" (#89261). A typographical error in the photo caption released with the story referred to Brandt as "dead of the Cathedral." In the text of the story, Brandt is identified as "dean" of St. Philip's Cathedral in Atlanta. Neither identification is true. Although Brandt is not a dean of the Cathedral in Atlanta, we are happy to report that he is alive and well, and is a Canon on the staff of St. Philip's.

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